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ABSTRACT

The relationships between several commonly utilized women's role questionnaires and several personality inventories was investigated. Undergraduates students (120 females, 80 males) completed several personality and sex-role questionnaires including the Personal Orientation Inventory (POI); Rotter's Locus of Control Scale (I-E), MAFERR Forms A, B, C, Attitudes towards Women Scale (AWS) and the Women as Managers Scale (WAMS). The questionnaires were administered during two separate sessions one week apart. An intercorrelation matrix was computed on the scores for each scale of the POI and the score for each of the other inventories, and then subjected to a principle axis factor analysis with Varimax rotation (BMD-08M). Results confirmed that several sex-role inventories (the WAMS, AWS, MAFERR Forms A and B) essentially measure a similar characteristic manner of evaluating women and their role, and that only moderate relationships between evaluation of women's role and identified personality characteristics of the subjects exist. The results of the study may help to account for the inconsistencies in previous research which utilized various women's role questionnaires to suggest personality characteristics. (Author)

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Personality Characteristics and

Evaluation of Women's Role

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Recent interest in the changing role of women in society has resulted in the development of various instruments designed to assess the perception of this multifaceted role. The relationships, however, between these instruments have not been clearly defined. The present study attempted to determine the relationship which exists between the Attitudes toward Women Scale (Spence & Helmreich, 1972), the Maferr Inventory of Feminine Values Forms A, B, and C (Steinman & Fox, 1966) and the more recently developed Women as Managers Scale (Peters, Tebor, & Taynor, 1974). It was hypothesized that significant positive relationships would exist between the scales for both male and female subjects since these scales appear to be tapping aspects of a global evaluation of women's role. One exception to this general hypothesis of a positive relationship was in regard to Maferr Form C. This inventory asks males and females to respond to items the way they believe man's ideal woman would. Female samples have consistently reported that man's ideal woman would be much more traditional and family oriented than they themselves were. Therefore, no prediction was made regarding females' Form C score and other scores on women's role questionnaires.

The relationships between these women's scales and personality variables have been only cursorily examined. It has been suggested by various authors, that individuals who view their own role as flexible and allowing for personal striving will display higher self-esteem and stronger feelings of personal competence. One widely used instrument purporting to measure flexibility and personal striving and other self-actualizing qualities is Shostrom's (1962) Personal Orientation Inventory (POI). This inventory consists of 150 items which are scored on two major scales and 10

sub-scales which reflect various aspects of self-actualizing qualities. It was hypothesized that a positive relationship should exist between self-actualizing characteristics and a liberal interpretation of women's role. Knapp (1976) has asserted that "social change, when evolving in the direction of greater freedom of opportunity to self-actualize can be quantified by the POI." Therefore, it would be expected that both males and females who score high on the POI scales would be more flexible in their expectations of women's role.

Additionally, Rotter's I-E or locus of control scale was ^{of interest} administered since it has been suggested that individuals who are self-actualized would perceive themselves as autonomous and would thus be likely to view events as contingent on their own skills and abilities (Knapp, 1976).

Method

Subjects for this study were enrolled in Introductory Psychology classes at Lamar University and received supplemental course credit for their participation. The subjects reported for two sessions, one week apart to complete the questionnaires. Presentation of the questionnaires was counterbalanced for order effect. One hundred twenty females and fifty-eight males successfully completed all questionnaires.

Results

Sex differences on questionnaires. There were no significant differences between males and females on mean scores on any of the POI scales. However, females were significantly more external on the locus of control measure than were the males ($\bar{X}$ females = 11.15, S.D. = 4.11; $\bar{X}$ males = 9.86, S.D. = 3.65; $t = 2.05$, $df = 176$, $p < .05$).

Females were significantly more liberal in their evaluation of women's role as managers and in their more global attitude towards women's role than were the

male subjects. (For the WAMS, $\bar{X}$ females = 124.23, S.D. = 14.00; $\bar{X}$ males = 109.34, S.D. = 20.2, $t = 5.06$, $df = 176$, $p < .001$; for the AWS, $\bar{X}$ females = 49.89, S.D. = 9.67, $\bar{X}$ males = 45.90, S.D. = 10.76, $t = 2.39$, $p < .05$).

On the Maferr, the only significant sex difference was on Form C. Females believed man's ideal woman to be much more traditional and family oriented than males reported their ideal woman would be. ($\bar{X}$ females = -14.11, S.D. 18.81, $\bar{X}$ males = 1.83, S.D. = 16.28, $t = 5.82$, $df = 176$, $p < .001$).

Relationships of the Women's Role Questionnaires. As anticipated, the WAMS, the AWS, and the Maferr Forms A and B were all significantly correlated with one another for both males and females. These questionnaires thus appear to measure a general evaluation of women's role. However, Form C of the Maferr is evaluated differently by females than by males. For males, view of the ideal women is significantly correlated with scores on the other women's role questionnaires. Women's perception of man's ideal woman is, however, unrelated to females' own interpretation of women's role.

Locus of Control and Self-Actualization. For both males and females a significant relationship exists between internality and Time Competence on the POI. Thus, individuals who view reinforcement as being contingent on their own behavior focus primarily on the present and their aspirations are tied meaningfully to present working goals. Additionally for females, locus of control is significantly related to Self-Regard ($r = -.27$, $p < .01$). That is, a female who scores as an internal is likely to display a positive self-image and to like herself because of her strength as a person. Locus of control did not significantly correlate with any of the women's role questionnaires.

Self-Actualization and Women's Role. For male subjects, there was a significant relationship between scores on Time Competence and scores on the WAMS. Men who are present-oriented have more liberal attitudes regarding women in a managerial

role. Further, men who display a liberal attitude on the Attitudes toward Women Scale have a high score on the Capacity for Intimate Contact scale and thus, are more likely to possess the ability to develop intimate relationships with others. Their interpersonal interactions are less encumbered by role expectations and obligations. No other POI scales were significantly related to the women's role questionnaires.

A number of significant correlations were found for females between measures of self-actualization and evaluation of women's role. Scores on the AWS were significantly related to scores on Time Competence, Self-Acceptance and Capacity for Intimate Contact. Thus, females who endorse a more liberal role for women focus on present goals, have a strong feeling of self-worth and have the ability to develop meaningful relationships with others.

Women who endorse an extra-family orientation for themselves and/or their ideal woman score high on Existentiality, Acceptance of Aggression, and Capacity for Intimate Contact. These individuals might be characterized by flexibility, acceptance of hostile feelings and relationships with others which are unencumbered by expectations and obligations.

Interestingly, females who believe man's ideal woman is highly family oriented, view the Nature of Man as essentially good and sees the opposites of life as meaningfully related. Closer examinations of these scales reveals some rather unusual items which are scored on the Nature of Man constructive scale; i.e., "Women should be trusting and yielding" and "Men should be assertive and affirming." Thus, at least part of the Nc Scale is measuring sex-role stereotypes and this may be the reason that the scale is correlated with traditional views of man's ideal woman.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that several questionnaires designed to measure various aspects of women's role in society are inter-related and may be tapping part of the same dimension. Individuals who endorse a liberal role for women on the more general Attitudes toward Women Scale and the Maferr Inventory of Feminine Values are more likely to endorse the role of women as managers. Females, however, are more liberal in their view of women's role than are males. This difference is most extreme on the Women as Managers Scale. Thus, in areas which have been much more strongly associated with man's domain, women are not accepted by many males.

The finding that more relationships exist between women's role questionnaires and POI scales for females than for males may indicate that the perception of women's role is a more central factor for females than for males. The relationships that exist do support the hypothesis that individuals who endorse a more flexible role for women score higher on measures of self-actualization.

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